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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, accept our praise and thanksgiving. You have been better to us than we deserve, for Your goodness and mercy pursue us each day. Great is Your faithfulness.

Lord, increase the faith of our lawmakers. Inspire them to believe that You can empower them to succeed in their striving to keep our Nation strong. Fill them with reverential awe as You thwart the schemes of the enemies of freedom. May our Senators comprehend the fact that Your intentions will prevail.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Karen Erika Donfried, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (European Affairs and Eurasian Affairs).

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

DEBT LIMIT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, Senate Democrats blocked a vote on a clean government funding piece of legislation. Senator SHELBY and I put forward legislation that could pass the Senate easily and keep the government open. We were ready to avoid a shutdown, get urgent relief to Louisiana, help vetted Afghans who helped America, and continue supporting Israel's Iron Dome, which saves innocent lives.

Senate Republicans were ready, and House Democratic leaders say they will act on whatever CR we send them. But Democrats blocked the Senate from even considering our legislation. Instead, the Democratic leader held a vote that he knew would fail on a bill he knew was a nonstarter—game-playing instead of governing.

So look, Mr. President, for more than 2 months—2 months—Republicans have explained that the unified Democratic Party government will not get bipartisan support for a debt limit hike

while they write a partisan taxing-and-spending spree behind closed doors. It is as simple as that.

Bipartisanship isn't a light switch that Democrats can switch on when they need to borrow money and flip off when they want to spend money. If Democrats want to use fast-track, party-line procedures to ram through trillions more in inflationary socialism, they will have to use the same tools to handle the debt limit. They have known this for more than 2 months. I made it perfectly clear 2 months ago.

The debt suspension that expired in August covered all the debt that had been actually accumulated by that date. Let me say that again. The debt suspension that expired in August covered all the debt that had been accumulated by that date. This is an argument not about the past but about the future, a future that Democrats have willfully decided they want to own on a party-line basis.

There is no constant tradition that says one-party governments get bipartisan help with the debt limit. That has been said over and over by the press, by the Democrats. Let me make it clear. There is no constant tradition that says one-party governments get bipartisan help with the debt limit.

Just between 2003 and 2010, there were five—five—occasions when the party in power had to get a debt limit hike through the Senate by themselves—five times. Interestingly enough, then-Senators Biden and SCHUMER voted no on raising the debt limit under President Bush 43 and made the united Republican government do it by themselves.

So, look, it is time for our Democratic colleagues to stop dragging their heels and get moving. They have had more than 2 months to accept it. Secretary Yellen just announced a new estimate that action on the debt limit may be necessary as early as October 18. Democrats will need to handle the debt limit before then.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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